

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Commissioner Tony Grippa *TG*
DATE: January 29, 2004
SUBJECT: SB 488, Quadrupling of NWFMD Property Tax

In my allocated commissioner discussion during the January 27th meeting, my plans were to discuss these issues. The unforeseen, unavoidable absence prevented my leading discussion on these important topics.

At the end of the BOCC meeting, Commissioner Maloy asked for a letter of support regarding SB 488. This is a substantial issue that should not have been decided at 11:20 p.m. There was no vote to waive the rules, no vote to agenda this item, it was simply passed without objection. Moreover, I have read Senator Lawson's letter which gives his description of the bill. No where in this letter does he ask us to support this initiative as his good friend Commissioner Maloy stated to the BOCC. The County Policy states, as well as Robert Rules of Order that all items of substance be brought up before the BOCC and if there is a majority of support, the item be put on an agenda at a subsequent meeting. This policy was not followed, and thus there was not an opportunity for debate or PUBLIC INPUT.

Many BOCC members, specifically Commissioner Maloy, know that I took the time to testify on this issue at the Leon County Delegation Meeting. Thus, using my absence (the fact I was at TMH with my baby daughter) in order to move forward on a controversial issue, is simply not appropriate.

The fact that this bill quadruples the NFWFMD property tax, allows gubernatorial appointment to tax our citizens, allows the rest of the state to vote on this measure, coupled with the fact that the NFWFMD has not taken a position on this item because they have a \$15 million dollar surplus of the past few years are the type of important issues that should be on an agenda and discussed with public input.

Because the BOCC has already taken a position, without discussion or a request from our delegation, I am asking that this item be put on the agenda for full debate, public input, and consideration. To do otherwise would seem unfair to Commissioners that might want to discuss this item, to the public, and most of all to the taxpayers.

TG/ct

cc: Leon County Legislative Delegation
 Jim King, Senate President
 Johnnie Byrd, Speaker of the House
 Parwez Alam, Leon County Administrator
 Herb Thiele, Leon County Attorney